Aspect: English Grammar
Topic: Preposition

Introduction

A preposition is a word that shows the relationship between a noun or pronoun and other words in a sentence.
It often tells where, when, how, or in what way something happens.

Simple definition for young learners:

A preposition is a position word — it tells where something is or when something happens. Example: The cat is ***under*** the table.

Expanded definition for higher levels:

In grammar, a preposition connects its object (usually a noun or pronoun) to another word in the sentence, expressing relations such as place, time, direction, cause, manner, means, or possession. A preposition is always followed by a prepositional object.

Types of Preposition

A. Basic Types (For Primary & Junior Levels)

1. Prepositions of Place/Position – Show where something is.
   in, on, under, over, beside, between, at, behind, near
   Example: The ball is ***between*** the shoes.
2. Prepositions of Time – Show when something happens.
   at, on, in, during, since, for, from, until
   Example: We meet ***at*** 5 p.m.
3. Prepositions of Direction/Movement – Show movement from one place to another.
   into, onto, to, toward, through, across, along, down, up
   Example: She walked ***into*** the room.

B. Advanced Classifications (For Senior Levels)

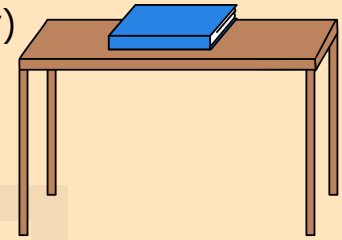
1. Prepositions of Cause, Reason, Purpose
   - *because of, due to, owing to, on account of*
2. Prepositions of Manner, Instrument, Agency
   - *by, with, via, through*
3. Prepositions of Concession
   - *despite, in spite of, notwithstanding*
4. Prepositions of Comparison/Contrast
   - *like, as, than*
5. Compound Prepositions
   - *according to, ahead of, apart from, next to, in front of*
6. Phrase Prepositions: Groups of words acting as one preposition.
   - *in addition to, in place of, by means of, with regard to*

How to Identify a Preposition

Teachers can guide students to check:

- Does the word show a relationship between a noun/pronoun and another word?
- Is there a prepositional object (noun/pronoun) after it?
- Can the sentence still make sense if we remove it, but lose a detail about where, when, and how?

Example:
The book is ***on*** the table. ('on' shows the relationship between 'book' and 'table')
We stayed ***until*** midnight. ('until' relates 'stayed' to 'midnight')



Usage of Preposition in Sentences

A. Place: The keys are ***on*** the desk.
B. Time: He was born ***in*** June.
C. Direction: They walked ***towards*** the park.
D. Cause/Reason: The game was cancelled ***because*** of the rain.
E. Manner/Means: We travelled ***by*** train.

Common Preposition + Object Patterns

at school / at the bus stop
on Monday / on the roof
in the kitchen / in the morning
by car / by the river
with a smile / with a pen

Engaging Classroom Activities

For Primary Level

- **Where's the Teddy?** – Place a toy in different positions and have students describe it.
- **Preposition Simon Says:** "Put your hand on your head," etc.
- **Picture Labelling:** Identify prepositions from a scene picture.

For Junior Level

- **Preposition Bingo:** Bingo cards with prepositions; students mark when heard.
- **Sentence Completion:** Fill in blanks with the correct prepositions.
- **Sorting Challenge:** Sort prepositions into categories: place, time, direction.

For Senior Level

- **Prepositional Phrase Expansion:** Start with a basic sentence and add more prepositional phrases for detail.
- **Error Correction:** Spot and fix preposition misuse in a passage.
- **Idioms with Prepositions:** Discuss expressions like in charge of, at odds with.

Exercises

A. Identify the prepositions in the following sentences:

1. The cat is under the bed.
2. We met at noon.
3. She ran into the shop.
4. They went by train.
5. I couldn't sleep because of the noise.

B. Fill in the blanks with suitable prepositions:

1. The picture is hanging ___ the wall.
2. He has been here ___ Monday.
3. They went ___ the park for a picnic.

C. Join the following with prepositions:

1. The book is (table) → The book is ___ the table.
2. She traveled (plane) → She traveled ___ plane.
3. We stayed (hotel) → We stayed ___ a hotel.

Teacher Tips for Engagement

- Use real classroom objects for demonstration.
- Incorporate movement — students act out prepositions physically.
- Story building — challenge students to write stories packed with prepositional phrases.
- Use visual diagrams to show the relationship between objects.

Suggested Subtopics for Further Reading

- Preposition vs. Adverb (e.g., "up the hill" vs. "stand up")
- Ending sentences with prepositions (formal vs. informal usage)
- Common errors with prepositions
- Idiomatic expressions with prepositions
- Prepositions in phrasal verbs

Sample Lesson Flow (All Levels)

- Warm-up: Show a picture and ask, "Where is the...?"
- Presentation: Introduce types of prepositions with examples.
- Practice: Group sorting, fill-in-the-blanks, or sentence building.
- Production: Write a paragraph with at least 7 prepositional phrases.
- Review & Feedback: Recap meaning, types, and usage.